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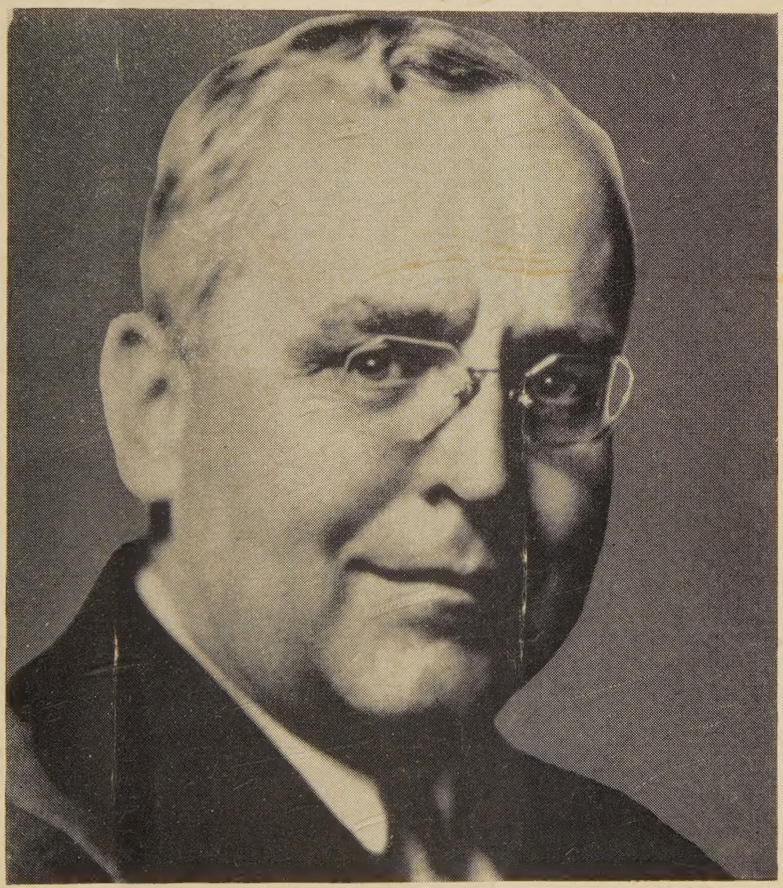
WORLD PARISH

DECEMBER, 1951



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President of the World Methodist Council

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A Message to the Methodists of the World

The Ecumenical Methodist Conference, assembled in its Eighth Meeting at Oxford, England, sends cordial greetings to all the Methodists throughout the world. Our meeting at Oxford recalls the close association of John and Charles Wesley with its University and Holy Club, and the debt which they owed to its academic life and its place in Christian history.

We met together to look with clear eyes and critical appraisal at the Methodism which we have inherited from our fathers, and its development through the years. We have considered the life of our Church in all its parts as it exists today. We have sought to make plans for the Church that is to be, so that, under God's guidance, it may fulfill His purposes for it. We have therefore reminded ourselves, in addresses and in discussion, of those teachings which were committed to us from the beginning—the sin of man and his need for salvation which he cannot of himself secure, the invitation to all, of every race and color, to receive the free grace of God, and find salvation and peace in Christ: the assurance of this salvation given by the Holy Spirit; the following of the way through fellowship and prayer and worship to perfect love of God and man; and the necessity for proclaiming to all men the truth which is in Christ.

Meeting, as we have done, in days so tragic and critical, we have been moved by the Gospel in which we believe to relate it to the present condition of man. At the root of all the world's disorders is sin, and apart from the salvation which is in Christ, there is no hope that these disorders will be cured. We have therefore sought to know God's will for man in all his relationships—in home, school, industry, society, national and international life. In particular, since in Christ all barriers of race and color are broken down, we declare that race discrimination of every kind must be resisted by the Church, because it is contrary to the mind of Christ.

In all our thought and discussion on these matters, we have rejoiced to recognize the fundamental unity of Methodism in ministry, membership and life. We are convinced that the more this unity and under-

standing are acknowledged and developed, the more effective will be the contribution of our Church both to the universal Church and to the life of the world.

To this end certain practical decisions have been taken:

(a) A Constitution has been set up which provides for the representation on the Ecumenical Council of every branch of Methodism in the world.

(b) To maintain the activities of the Council and to facilitate communications between its sections a permanent Secretariat has been set up, to have offices in the United States and Great Britain.

(c) The Council or Conference will meet at intervals of five years, the next meeting to be in 1956.

(d) Permanent committees, in addition to the Executive Committee, to deal with such questions as evangelism, faith and order, women's work, education, the exchange of preachers, youth, and finance.

(e) A special committee has been appointed to further the project, accepted by the Council, of a memorial in Oxford to the Wesleys in the form of an ecumenical Methodist house.

(f) The name of the Council will henceforth be the World Methodist Council.

(g) It has been decided to hold an evangelistic mission simultaneously throughout the world in 1953, the year 1952 to be used as a year of intense spiritual preparation.

We wish to affirm explicitly that, so far from being in rivalry with the World Council of Churches, or wishing to isolate ourselves from the movement towards the reunion of the Churches, our purpose in promoting the closer unity of Methodism is that this may make a stronger contribution to the larger unity of Christ's Church throughout the world.

In full consciousness of the need of man, and the imperfection of our service, we feel urgently moved to recall all the members of our world family to our first works of scriptural holiness, fellowship and evangelism, and to remind them of the insistent duty of applying the Gospel to all the conditions of human life. We say to every Methodist: "Let your walk and conversation be such as adorn the Gospel of Christ."

This is a matter which concerns every minister and member. We hope that it will be given prayerful consideration in every Church.

IVAN LEE HOLT
W. F. HOWARD
Presidents

OSCAR THOMAS OLSON
HAROLD ROBERTS
Secretaries

Report on the Discussion Groups

A Digest of the findings of the Discussion Groups at the World Methodist Conference, Oxford, prepared by the Rev. W. J. Noble, formerly President of the Conference and General Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society of the British Methodist Church.

I approached the task of summarizing the findings of the Discussion Groups with a good deal of misgiving, before I had even seen the questions. When I had them, and the answers began to come in, it was not so much a comparatively mild sentiment like misgiving that flooded my spirit; it was a dark foreboding. There were forty-two questions posed, and the material that reached me would easily form several books. I tried to catalogue them, but when I reached a dozen different chapter headings, and there were still a number of questions which stubbornly refused to line up under any of them, that method had to be abandoned.

There is, however, one broad and general division. Most of the questions dealt with in the first three or four days concerned, in the main, points of doctrine or experience or related matters. Those for the later part had a closer relation to the Church in the community, the nation or the world. These divisions are not absolute, and at certain points they cross one another. But to observe them seemed the best way of avoiding confusion and presenting something approaching a coherent picture.

The questions, or some of them, provoked lively discussion and the brisk exchange of complementary and even conflicting opinions. That is as it should be. Representing as we do many countries, different modes of life, varieties of social order and political conviction, different developments of ecclesiastical and even doctrinal emphasis, it was not to be expected that there would be on all matters a precise, polite and rather soulless harmony or uniformity. That would have defeated the purpose, or one of the purposes, which the questions had in mind. None the less, on matters which are the principal concern of the Church, there is a measure of agreement which is significant and encouraging.

I cannot forbear to pay a tribute to the reporters, whose task must have been so difficult, and who have discharged it with the greatest skill and punctuality, and on the whole, a condensed brevity which is the soul not only of wit but of group reporting. If I may venture a suggestion for future programs, it is that room be found in each session for brief reports on the group discussions of the previous day. They are too far-reaching, too complicated, too important, too voluminous and comprehensive to be bundled together and dumped on the floor of the Conference in one brief closing session.

I am a reporter, not a commentator or a critic. Like an editor, I do not accept responsibility for the view expressed by any correspondents. Any complaints about, or disagreements with, these findings should be addressed elsewhere.

We began with questions which in broad general terms may be said to be doctrinal. Can we today hold Wesley's doctrine of justification in its entirety? Do we sometimes interpret it too individualistically? How is it related to sanctification? Can there be such an attainment as perfection? Justification, it is said, is a word almost unknown to this generation. If that is so, it is not certain whether it is or is not a reflection on our preaching, though it is believed that we have fallen short in this, and have failed to lay proper emphasis on the two facts of sin and conversion. Some elements of a spurious humanism have invaded the Church, and have crept into the pulpit. It is necessary that this fundamental doctrine should be restated, for it is a matter not of vocabulary or terminology, but of the faith itself. That doctrine which Luther held and which Wesley preached must be restored to supremacy. It is also true that we have been inclined to hold a too narrow view of justification, for while religion is primarily a personal matter between the soul and God, it has social implications and obligations which are ignored at our peril. There is no contradiction between Wesley's insistence on conversion and his declaration that the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion.

Justification is the prelude to, or the first step towards, sanctification. He who is justified, and continues obedient to his developing sense of the will of God, moves on toward sanctification. But there is some risk in applying a kind of time schedule to this process. The ripening of the Christian life, though it takes place in time, is affected by other considerations, and notably, of course, by the response of the soul to the will of God. There never comes a moment when we should be wise to make the presumptuous claim that we are entirely sanctified, unless we are to make void or limit the grace of God. It must not be thought incredible that in the growing experience of the Christian life, the dedicated soul should be made conscious of full obedience, through the movement of the Holy Spirit, to the will of God.

That has some bearing on "perfect love." It is not surprising that the groups found some difficulty here, partly due to their uncertainty of Wesley's precise meaning when he used the phrase. One group raised the question whether the subconscious could be sanctified. They did not answer it, and you will not expect me to do so, for that would not only be to trespass beyond my province, but to plunge into a deep where all my thoughts are drowned. But perfect love at least implies perfect motive, and that is possible if we remember that it is the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts. Moreover, though analogies can but illustrate and not prove, there can be something very like perfect love in the relation between child and parent, though

the child is compassed about with the limitations proper to its stage of life and knowledge. Sin is a complete barrier to perfect love, but that ignorance which is inevitably a part of our present human experience need not be, if moment by moment we walk in the light of God. And that love may and ought to reach out beyond the Christian fellowship to all men, expressing itself in service to those in need, in the attempt to create a spiritual atmosphere in which the Gospel can have hope, in contending against every kind of wrong, in proclaiming the Gospel, and not least by giving evidence in our own lives to its saving power.

Passing from this, and leaving, as everywhere, many gaps, we come to some questions on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The latter is said to differ from other means of grace in that it lays peculiar obligations upon all Christians, that it confronts worshipers specially with the Cross and Passion of our Lord, that it employs material symbols to enforce spiritual truth, that it brings home the infinite cost of man's redemption, that, more than any other form of worship, it unites all Christians in intention, though, sadly and ironically, it has divided too many of them.

When we touch the question of Baptism, and in particular, Infant Baptism, we enter a field of battle. If Infant Baptism is not what is theologically known as Baptismal Regeneration, in what sense is it a Sacrament? Some hold that it is not, being a dedication of the child to God by the Church and parents, but a service in which the child can take no conscious part. If that be so, we may as well surrender to the Baptists, with what grace we can!

But powerful arguments are offered against it. In the Baptismal Service, grace is imparted to the child of God. Grace can be operative, and is operative, before and apart from full conscious response on the part of the recipient. American and British Methodism seem to differ at a rather deep level here. The former has omitted from the Service the words: "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock." The latter retains them, and I wish there were time to pursue the intensely interesting argument that arose upon this vital point, which the reporters expressed with much fullness and skill. It may be relevant to observe that both the Anglican and the Methodist Churches are much exercised on this matter, and the latter have had a committee working on it for a long time. Some of the material supplied by the groups would be of interest and value to them, but to advance it intelligently here would take all the time. It is clear that this is one place at which World Methodism would profit if it were thinking together, for it is surely important that on such an issue we should seek to have a uniform doctrine.

Then again, on that question of fellowship, which was one of the main planks in Wesley's program, it was felt that something had been lost in the intervening years, needed to be recovered, and was in part

being recovered by means which were considered to be appropriate to the conditions of today. The traditional Class Meeting, though much reduced, still exists in British but not in American Methodism, but there was no direct evidence from other parts of the world. It has been to some extent adapted to changed circumstances. But all were agreed that, in whatever form, and insistently in forms that involved spiritual training and the culture of the Christian life, fellowship must be brought back to its place in the Church, and it was admitted that in this there had been some failure.

To the question whether changed methods of communication affect the primacy of preaching, the answer is that while radio, television and drama are valuable for what is called "softening up" the conscience of the unbeliever, it must be recognized that preaching is a vital part of the life of the worshiping Church, and must be associated in it with prayer, Scripture and music, and the very definite and intelligent participation of the congregation. Corporate prayer, again, should be encouraged, and appears to be increasing amongst us, partly by the use of liturgies and the better employment of our hymnbooks. It is one method of fostering a larger interest and share in worship.

But to turn back for a moment. Is it the fact that Methodism has no distinctive doctrines but only distinctive emphases? The answer is yes, with a rider. Our doctrines are those found in the New Testament, though some of them were practically rediscovered by Wesley, such as assurance and Christian Perfection, not to speak of the universality of the Gospel. We have also been held to have a genius for a good kind of synthesis—of the evangelical doctrines, of grace and works, of the inclusion of both Word and Sacrament in worship, all of which tends to a catholicity of spirit, and saves us, it is hoped, from a merely negative Protestantism or nonconformity.

Some kind of nationalism was implicit in the question whether there is any case for a National Church. It was agreed that unity within a given community, and distinctive characteristics derived from national cultures, may strengthen and enrich the life of the Church, but we do not believe in an Established or State Church, which denies complete freedom of the Church, while nationalistic and therefore separated churches are a denial of the Holy Catholic Church. I permit myself here the only personal comment I am making in this report, when I remind you that no less a person than William Temple said that a National Church was a heresy—and he used the word in its full theological meaning.

Now from this point, I must be selective, and touch upon only a few questions with rigid economy of words. Will closer relations with other Churches provide the opportunity for extending our social witness? That witness, for us, was derived from Wesley's own interpretation of the Gospel, and made Methodism the leader in many kinds of necessary social activities. A wider union might give occasion for

continuing or increasing it, but it might also water it down. We have views about gambling and temperance and some other ills of society which are by no means held so strongly in some other Churches, and that must be kept in mind in all the discussion about union or closer co-operation.

Have we any special contributions to make to Church Order? Yes, and amongst them the very much greater use of laity in preaching, in spiritual leadership, in conduct of the Church's business; the circuit system; our manner of receiving ministers, from the circuit level up to the Conference, and of providing their training under supervision in and after college; the security of the ministry, and the placing of the whole ministry at the disposal of the whole Church.

On the other hand, we can learn from some other Churches how to enrich our worship in reverence and dignity, in a decorum that is sincere and not artificial. The phrase is not in the report of any group, but a friendly critic once said that it troubled him that Nonconformists in their worship were too much inclined to "hobnob with God."

Some valuable contributions were made to the discussion of marriage. How can we uphold the Christian standard in a secular society? Marriage for the Christian is more than a civil contract, and infinitely more than a physical union. But to try to impose Christian standards by civil law would be to make the State a servant of the Church. It is our task to Christianize public opinion, and not least by exhibiting in our own lives the standards of marriage which are set up in the New Testament. There should be more explicit preaching on the nature of marriage, and more careful preparation of those about to enter upon it. It might be necessary even to contemplate the denial of marriage in Church to those who are unwilling to enter upon it in the spirit of the worshiping Church or to share in its fellowship. There is no common judgment amongst us about the remarriage of divorced persons.

With this are bound up the influences affecting the stability of the family: the nomadic and rootless character of much of life today, the difficulties of collective living aggravated by lack of houses, the increasing preoccupation of women in work that takes them out of their homes, the inordinate passion for amusements that interferes with family fellowship, the loss of high moral standards in general. Against this, the idea of the home as the center of life should be encouraged, and young people be trained to make it so. The inculcation of a strong sense of discipline in all relationships is necessary.

And that leads on to children and education. Education is a unity, and to divide it into religious and secular is to miss its purpose. It should all be related to the knowledge of God and obedience to Him. Conditions differ greatly in various countries. In Great Britain, for instance, religious education is compulsory, and through the "agreed syllabus" is making a great contribution to the Christian view of life.

That is, however, by no means the case in all countries, or in most. Where all state education is secular, as in the U.S.A., the responsibility of the Church for Christian education and Christian centers of learning is very heavy. But everywhere the provision of an increasing number of teachers of Christian conviction is more than anything else the key to the problem.

The questions of work and industry (which are not the same thing necessarily) elicited some valuable results. The Christian doctrine of work includes these elements: that the worker serves for the welfare of the community, that he believes in the dignity of work and does it to the glory of God, that he has a specifically Christian purpose, which is the redemption of the whole social order through the grace of God. Therefore, he scorns to do as little as possible for as much as possible, whether he be worker or employee. Some occupations are virtually impossible to a Christian, while it is difficult to maintain that sense of vocation, which should govern all work, in conditions of mass production which seem to depersonalize all concerned. But work, besides being necessary, must express personality and contribute to the common good. It is all service to God and our fellows. Even drudgery can be transformed. But the Church should do all in its power to conserve the truth that workers are not, in the old phrase, "hands," but people. And at the back of it all is the fact that proper pride in one's work, a sense of social responsibility, a desire to serve, are the true incentives.

A related question, vast in its scope, asked what views were fostered by free enterprise, and what were likely to occur under state management. And what of the tension between economic liberty, social justice, and equality in reward? It was thought that unredeemed humanity, under any system, was apt to slip from under its burdens and reach out a long arm for the available reward. It was felt that selfishness might be given larger opportunities under a state-managed economy, that political issues might be controlled by economic forces, and that there was a temptation for people to give less than their best because of the lessening of individual responsibility. If the dangers of state control are many, those of free enterprise must not be forgotten: greed and avarice, the setting of the interests of the many below those of the few, the possible tyranny of power in the hand of economic strength, and, again, the control of national issues by economic forces. But in all this vast and complicated subject, it is the Church's responsibility to proclaim that human values must be supreme in any system. The profit motive is not in itself immoral, and it exists at all levels, but it must be related to reason, honesty, and righteousness.

Problems of race came under three separate questions which can be answered together. It is as undesirable as it is quite impossible that racial differences should be done away. Every race has its contribution to make to the profit of the whole. There are also differences

of tradition, of culture, and of intellectual achievement, which must be recognized. The standard of equal opportunity for all is the Christian doctrine. Where this standard is ignored or denied, the whole life of a country is diminished and damaged. And where Christians allow themselves to be imprisoned within sub-Christian prejudices they are not only denying their faith but causing grievous hurt to the body of Christ. There are no easy solutions to this great problem, but none can be found at all save through the Christian spirit and approach. One group explicitly asked the Conference to adopt a resolution affirming that all forms of racial discrimination, whether in social attitudes or in the constitution and laws of a state or in their application, is non-Christian, and to declare its unalterable opposition to any such discrimination.

Finally, the group of questions dealt with in the last sessions. Is the laity given enough, or too much, responsibility in the affairs of the local church? One group thought the questions ought to be restated to read: "Are the laity accepting enough responsibility?" for it was believed that their place extended far beyond finance and organization and included a share in the preaching, teaching, and pastoral work. In this, of course, they were going back to the practice, not only of early Methodism, but of Methodism through many years of its history, and in part, of Methodism today. Some spoke of the difficulty of lifting the loyalty of the laity above church membership, attendance at worship, and subscriptions to active service, particularly in the spiritual life of the church, involving the giving and time and thought and energy. In England five out of seven, and in Australia two out of three, of the services taken each Sunday are taken by local preachers, without whose splendid work thousands of churches, particularly in rural areas, could scarcely survive. But that service needs to be extended in other directions, and especially in connection with the leadership of fellowship groups. One of the glories of Methodism has been the voluntary and unstinted service of its laity in the things of the spirit as well as the material concerns of the Church. To let that perish would be an irreparable loss. The spiritual independence of the minister and his special pastoral relationship to his people must be safeguarded, but these would not be threatened by the laity taking a larger share in some forms of pastoral work.

Lay leaders should, of course, have the benefit of some training, as is now largely true for local preachers and Sunday school teachers. They should also be trained for other forms of service, such as youth work and leadership in prayer circles and fellowship classes. There is still a great reservoir of potential service in the laity of the Methodist Church. Probably more such service is given than in any other Church, but it should not be beyond the power of Methodism, with its genius for setting people to work, to release much more.

On another point, whether we are sufficiently aware of our respon-

sibility in local and national politics, there seemed to be some doubt. Few people do more than vote, and many do not even do that, in local or national elections. Politics have, unhappily—in England, at least—been dropped into municipal affairs. These, as well as the government of the nation as a whole, in most countries are left too much to the professional or semi-professional politician, often on the plea that politics are too dirty a business to be touched by decent people. If they are, that is a sad reflection on Christians. One of their duties in the world is to "redeem society and reform the nation." It is a part of our business to influence all the governmental life of the land in which we live.

Digest of Proceedings

Ecumenical Methodist Council
August 31, 1951; September 6, 1951

Ecumenical Methodist Conference
September 1, 1951; September 6, 1951

Wesley Memorial Church, Oxford, England

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, which met in London on August 24 and 25, the name of the organization was changed to WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL. This change was approved by both the Council and the Conference.

COMMITTEES

On the nomination of the Executive Committee certain committees were constituted to serve during the sessions. These were a Business Committee and Committees on Nominations, Finance, Evangelism, Youth Work, Woman's Work, the Oxford Memorial, and Courtesies.

It was agreed that certain Standing or Continuation Committees should be formed, as follows: Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Committee on Evangelism, Committee on Woman's Work, Committee on Youth and Young Adult Work, Committee on Education, Committee on Exchange of Preachers, and Committee on Faith and Order. Members of these committees were nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected by the Council. (See pages 15-19.)

The report of the Committee on Evangelism, which was adopted, projected a world-wide simultaneous evangelistic movement among all Methodist bodies in 1952 and 1953. The year 1952 is to be a period of preparation and 1953 will be the year of evangelism. Aldersgate Day,

May 24, 1952, will be a Day of Dedication and May 26, 1953, will be a Day of Thanksgiving.

The function of the Oxford Memorial Committee is to promote the establishing of a Wesley Memorial and Ecumenical Methodist Center at Oxford. This is to be a house or hostel to accommodate about forty resident students. It was estimated that the cost of building and endowment would be approximately $420,000.00.

The Committee on Woman's Work submitted a Constitution and a plan for developing fellowship among the Methodist women of the world.

The Youth Committee recommended the exchange of youth delegations and literature among various Methodist bodies, and an exploration of the possibility of a World Methodist Youth Conference.

The function of the Committee on Faith and Order is to cooperate in an advisory capacity with all Methodist bodies which contemplate union with other groups, to the end that the essential Methodist witness shall be carried into such unions. This Committee has two Sections, a Theological Section and a Section on Church Relations.

The Finance Committee recommended an annual budget of $15,000.00, of which $12,000.00 should be raised in the United States, $2,000.00 in Great Britain, and $1,000.00 in other parts of the world.

ORGANIZATION AND OFFICERS

It was decided that the official structure of the World Methodist Council should include one President, an Honorary President, certain Honorary Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, an Associate Treasurer who should be Treasurer in the United States, and a Permanent Secretariat with headquarters in Great Britain and the United States. These officers were elected by the Council on nomination of the Nominating Committee. (See pages 14-15.)

Certain minor changes were made in the sectional organization. The Nominating Committee, after consultation with the representatives of each Section, presented nominations for the membership of the World Methodist Council and the personnel were elected by the Council. (See pages 20-25.)

INTERNATIONAL METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The affiliated International Methodist Historical Society submitted a report which included a Constitution, newly elected officers (see pages 19-20), and a list of approved projects, all of which were confirmed by the Council and the Conference. The approved projects are as follows:

1. WORLD PARISH, the news bulletin of world Methodism.
2. WHO'S WHO IN METHODISM.
3. An International Index of Methodist Documents.

4. A new and annotated edition of the JOURNAL OF FRANCIS ASBURY.

5. The world-wide observance of Aldersgate Sunday.

6. An ALBUM OF METHODIST HISTORY.

7. An ENCYCLOPEDIA OF METHODISM, enlisting the Methodist scholarship of the world and covering all phases of Methodist history, biography, geography, theology, and work.

MEETINGS AND DATES

The Executive Committee recommended that the next meeting of the World Methodist Council should be held in 1956 and in the United States, and this was adopted by the Council. At a later meeting of the Conference Bishop J. Wascom Pickett invited the body to meet in India, pointing out that 1956 will mark the centennial of Methodism in that country. After discussion the whole matter of time, place, and nature of the 1956 meeting was referred for final determination to the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee was asked to study the relationship of the World Methodist Council to the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council with particular reference to the clearance of dates and programs. The Committee was also requested to include in the 1956 program the story of Methodism among the Negro groups in the United States.

RESOLUTIONS AND MESSAGES

At the last session of the Conference the Committee on Courtesies presented a report expressing appreciation for the hospitality of British Methodism and the labors of the Oxford Methodists which had made the meetings so pleasant and successful.

The Rev. W. J. Noble presented a remarkably able digest of the findings of the various Discussion Groups which had met daily, compiled from the statements of reporters appointed by the groups. (See pages 5-12.)

The Rev. W. J. Noble also presented the Message of the Conference to the Methodists of the World. (See pages 3-4.)

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORLD METHODIST CONFERENCE

The Proceedings of the Eighth World Methodist Conference at Oxford will be published as early as practicable. The volume will contain the addresses, the business proceedings, and lists of members and delegates. Price, probably $2.75. Send your order at once to Rev. Frank Cumbers, Epworth Press, 25-35 City Road, London, E. C. 1, England. You may send your remittance with the order or pay for the book when it is ready for delivery.

Reports and Notes

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EVANGELISM

We believe that God has a word for World Methodism. Every session of the Conference has deepened that conviction. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are being led to a clearer recognition and fuller understanding of the essential and timeless contribution of World Methodism, not only to the Church Universal, but to the millions whom we are commissioned to win for Christ and His Church.

With faith in our historic mission to offer Christ to all men, we believe it would be tragic if this great Conference closed without a clear and definite declaration of the task of World Evangelism.

As directed by the Executive Committee, we considered the possibilities of a world-wide, simultaneous mission during a period to be determined. We believe that a World Methodism, spiritually equipped for such an adventure, might change the currents of contemporary history and write a new chapter in the Acts of the Apostles.

The Committee is not unmindful of the difficulties, including the varying climates and customs and conditions of the many countries represented in the Conference. It does not believe any difficulty to be insuperable, and after prayerful thought and careful consideration, it makes the following recommendations:

That 1952 shall be a year of intensive spiritual preparation, during which the Methodist people in every land shall be called upon to receive for themselves the fullness of the Gospel and to prepare to offer it to others. That May 24, 1952, shall be a day of Dedication in World-wide Methodism.

That 1953 shall be a year of Evangelism, during which we offer Christ to men everywhere. That May 26, 1953 (which is also Whitsunday), shall again be a day of Dedication and/or Thanksgiving.

That a Standing Committee be appointed to supervise the distribution of literature and to deal with all other matters related to this great adventure. The Committee recommends that the Rev. Dr. W. E. Sangster be Chairman of the Committee, and Dr. Harry Denman and the Rev. Colin A. Roberts be Joint Secretaries.

These recommendations are submitted in the faith that the Oxford Conference came for such a time as this, in order to give us clear thinking and warm hearts for the work so dear to the heart of our founder, John Wesley, and which is the Passion of our Living Lord.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE OXFORD MEMORIAL

The Committee on the Oxford Memorial makes the following recommendations, on which it has agreed:

1. To approve the project of establishing in Oxford a World Methodist Centre.
2. The object is to foster mutual understanding and fellowship between the various branches of our World Church, which delegates at this Conference have found for themselves in living together in Oxford.

3. That the form of this project be the following, or some close modification of it:

   (a) A House to accommodate about 40 residents (of which some may be married couples), with Chapel, Library, Common Room, Dining Room, Kitchen and quarters for a Warden and the necessary domestic staff.

   (b) A body of residents, studying at Oxford for longer or shorter periods, having as its nucleus ministerial students, but including also lay students up to the capacity of the House. The House should be open to members of all branches of World Methodism, and the United Churches in which The Methodist Church was a constituent part, who are ready to share sympathetically and fully in the ideals of the Centre.

   (c) A Warden, who should be a Methodist Minister, charged with the responsibility of guiding the residents in the best use of their time in Oxford, forwarding the ends of World Methodism by gathering into the fellowship of the House representatives of as many branches of World Methodism as possible, and fostering through the common life of the House a mutual thought and insight into the needs of the world.

   (d) As a more distant objective, an annual lectureship through which Methodist scholarship may make a contribution to the University and to the Universal Church.

4. That the House should be directed by a Board of Management appointed by and responsible to the World Methodist Council. Legal advice should be taken to ascertain how the Council could create a holding corporation.

5. We recommend to the World Methodist Council:

   (a) That it commend the project to its constituent Churches or Conferences, and request their participation and support.

   (b) That it appoint a Committee to present the project to the Conferences; and should it find sufficient support, to make the financial arrangements for acquiring a suitable property and endowing the Centre adequately; and when it is agreed that the arrangements, both financial and administrative, have reached a satisfactory state, to take steps to bring the Centre into being.

6. We estimate that the building will cost approximately 50,000 pounds, and that 100,000 pounds should be secured for endowment, this being a total of approximately $420,000.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMAN'S WORK

We believe that the Christian Church was from the beginning composed of men and women who found that, as with the Jew and Greek, bond and free, there was a new relationship between them in Christ Jesus; and that from the first, the women had recognised work in the Christian community. There is no part of the Church's business which is wholly the concern of men, not wholly the concern of men and women, and this applies especially to any major issue. We believe that only by incorporating the thought, worship and fellowship of women

can the mind of Methodism function rightly, and that only so shall we be able to contribute to wider ecumenical thinking.

CONSTITUTION

NAME: There shall be a Standing Committee of the World Methodist Council on the work of women in The Methodist Church.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Standing Committee shall be to strengthen the bonds between Methodist women of all lands, to help women church members to make a full contribution to the life, leadership and evangelism of the Church, and to make known and strengthen the work of the World Methodist Council.

MEMBERSHIP: The Standing Committee shall be composed of the Officers of the Council, ex officio, the Officers of the Committee, ex officio, the women members of the Council, plus one representative to be elected by each section.

TERM OF OFFICE: The term of office of membership of the Standing Committee shall be the period between one meeting of the World Methodist Council and the next. Any vacancies occurring in the interim shall be filled by the appropriate appointing body.

MEETINGS: The Woman's Committee of the World Methodist Council shall meet regularly at the time and place of the meetings of the World Methodist Council, on which occasion officers shall be elected. Additional meetings may be held by vote of the Women's Committee on recommendation of the executive officers of the Committee.

OFFICERS: The Standing Committee shall elect a Chairman, who shall be the presiding officer of the Standing Committee and a member of the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council. The Standing Committee shall also elect two or more vice-chairmen, a recording secretary, a treasurer, and such other officers as the needs may require.

DUTIES: The duties of the Standing Committee shall be to:

1. Send regular information by correspondence to the constituent members of the Committee concerning the progress of the Ecumenical Movement.
2. Consult with the Programme Committee of the Ecumenical Conference.
3. Provide for the interchange of ideas and experiences between the Women's Groups of the different countries represented.
4. Arrange for the exchange of official visitors among the national Women's Groups.
5. Publish reports, when necessary, of the development of the Ecumenical Movement as it relates to the place and work of Methodist women in the Church around the world.

FINANCE: The Women's Committee shall be financed in the same way as the other Standing Committees of the Council. Any money raised by the Women's Committee shall be for the work of the Council as a whole.

REPORT OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE

I. We desire to register our deep appreciation of the action of the Council in making it possible for a Youth Section to share in the Oxford

Conference. The enlarged experience which has come to us here of the fellowship and life of World Methodism has been an enormous enrichment to us all, and we long for vast numbers of young people in our Churches to share this experience.

II. It is our earnest hope that future World Methodist Conferences will likewise include such a Youth Section, to the end that the spirit, vision and concern shared by our senior brethren concerning Methodist ecumenicity may be caught by an increasing number of young Methodists everywhere. We regard this as imperative if the work is to endure and fructify.

III. In future Youth Sections at these Conferences we believe it would be most helpful if those responsible for the nomination of delegates attempt to secure the representation of both young people themselves (from 18-23 or 25) and workers among children and young people. We ask the Council to endorse this suggestion and commend it to the appropriate youth departments of the Churches.

IV. We earnestly believe that the present need is for some means whereby the encounter we have begun here at Oxford may be continued and extended to young people and their leaders throughout the world. To this end, the following suggestions commend themselves to the Committee:

(a) The exchange of fraternal youth delegations on as wide a scale as possible on the occasion of national Methodist youth assemblies of various kinds; and that the Youth Committee explore the possibility of holding Ecumenical Methodist Youth Conferences.

(b) Interchange of youth workers in summer schools and institutes.

(c) Interchange of literature on youth work, giving facts and comment on youth work in the various countries.

(d) Initiation of a scheme whereby all kinds of youth groups may be linked with kindred groups in various lands, exchanging news, photos, materials, et cetera.

(e) Initiation of a Standing Youth Committee of the World Methodist Council through which such projects as the above may be organized.

V. In all this, we are conscious that any Methodist ecumenical youth movement, as such, must be closely related to, and co-ordinated with, such National Councils of Christian youth as may exist, such as the Youth Department of the British Council of Churches and the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches.

WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

The officers and committees of the World Methodist Council are beginning the process of perfecting an effective working organization. The British members of the Executive Committee met late in October for preliminary planning. It is likely that headquarters may be established in London by the spring or summer of 1952.

In the United States there have been conferences between the secretary, the chairman of the U.S. Executive Committee, and the president of the World Methodist Council, and a meeting of the officers of the Executive Committee was held on December 4th, at which plans were made for a full meeting of the Executive and Finance Committees. Questions of budget, headquarters, and general policy were discussed by the Executive.

On September 25th the President and the American Secretary appeared before the World Service Commission, which prepares the general benevolent budget for The Methodist Church, and formally requested an appropriation of $12,000 per year as the Section's part of the budget suggested at Oxford. This application will be passed on by the General Conference, which meets in San Francisco in April and May, 1952.

This number of World Parish, as has been noted, publishes the whole personnel of the World Methodist Council, as well as reports and a digest of Proceedings. It will be seen that the roster is complete, with the exception of a few correct addresses which the Secretary hopes to receive from members who possess the information. After the Springfield Conference in 1947 nearly three years were required to secure the membership of the various Sections. The American Secretary is preparing the necessary stationery and will publish a small handbook of information in vest pocket size.

"WHO'S WHO IN METHODISM"

The monumental "Who's Who in Methodism" is nearing completion and should be published by the first of 1952 or shortly thereafter. It will contain around a thousand pages and the sketches of many thousand living Methodists.

There has been a long delay in the appearance of this volume. This was due in part to mechanical difficulties and printing delays, but mainly to the very great difficulties involved in handling over 50,000 names and securing returns of the information blanks. Nothing of the kind had ever before been attempted and the task was far greater and more complicated than had been anticipated.

"Who's Who in Methodism" is under the sponsorship of the International Methodist Historical Society, the World Methodist Council, and the American Association of Methodist Historical Societies. The work of compilation was done by the last named body under the general editorship of its Executive Secretary, who is also a Secretary of the other two organizations.

"ALBUM OF METHODISM"

The "Album of Methodism," picture story of the Wesleyan movement, has been completed and is in the hands of publishers in the United States. It was compiled by Dr. Elmer T. Clark, with the advice of Rev. Frank Baker in Great Britain and Dr. Jacob S. Payton in the United States.

This volume, which has been in course of preparation for several years, will be a book of around 350 pages, size 9x12 inches, and will

contain nearly 1,000 pictures. The only text will be the legends of the illustrations. The pictures include the familiar classics of Methodism and many that are not so well known; they were drawn from all Methodist sources and from the author's collection of prints. The book will be priced at $6.00 by the publishers, the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press of New York and Nashville.

ASBURY'S JOURNAL

The famous *Journal* of Francis Asbury, most important document of American Methodism and a classic of all branches of the Wesleyan family, has been out of print for a hundred years or more and is now almost unobtainable. The publication of a new and annotated edition has for several years been on the agenda of the American Association of Methodist Historical Societies. Some work had been done, but the Association had not received any encouragement from Methodist publishers.

At Oxford this project was adopted by the International Methodist Historical Society and by the World Methodist Council, which approved the Society's report on the subject, and assurances have been received regarding publication when the work is ready.

The Secretary (U.S.A.) has entered into correspondence with certain students who have been working on the *Journal.* Chief among these is Professor William Warren Sweet, one of the outstanding Methodist historians in the United States, who has completed the first dozen years of Asbury's record. This will be pursued and it is hoped that in due course this important work will be available to Methodist readers with explanatory notes that have not before been published.

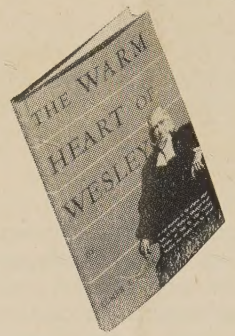
METHODIST DOCUMENTS

Among the projects adopted by the International Methodist Historical Society and approved by the World Methodist Council is the preparation of an International Index of Methodist Documents. This, of course, is a large undertaking that will require much time for its completion, but it is long overdue and will be most valuable if it can be carried through.

No concrete action has yet been taken. It is suggested, however, that all historical societies, institutions, and individuals in possession of Methodist documents of any kind should at once begin the work of preparing lists of the same, with brief descriptions of their nature and subject matter, to the end that the work of collecting and indexing them may be expedited.

WANTED

Persons having Methodist books, letters, documents, prints and similar materials for sale are requested to send a list of them to Dr. Elmer T. Clark, 150 Fifth Ave., New York 11, U.S.A., together with descriptions and prices desired. These will be listed from time to time in World Parish and purchasers may thus be found. Among the items presently desired are the first editions of sections 1, 2, 6, 15, and 18 of John Wesley's Journal.



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